

Message Text

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FOR AMBASSADOR

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TAGS: EPAP, CA

SUBJECT: U.S./CANADIAN MEAT PROGRAM

REF : KATZ/ENDERS TELECON 12/6/76

1. THE CANADIAN DELEGATION ARRIVED AT MEAT NEGOTIATIONS
DECEMBER 6 WITHOUT INSTRUCTIONS THAT WOULD PERMIT
DELEGATION TO NEGOTIATE OR CONCLUDE ANY UNDERSTANDING WITH
THE U.S. REGARDING MEAT EXPORTS FROM CANADA DURING 1977.
THE DELAY ON THE PART OF THE GOC IN COMING TO A DECISION
REGARDING OUR PROPOSAL FOR A MEAT TRADE AGREEMENT PLACES
IN JEOPARDY THE CURRENT EFFORT TO NEGOTIATE SIMULTANEOUSLY
VOLUNTARY RESTRAIN AGREEMENTS WITH THE THIRTEEN OTHER
MEAT EXPORTING COUNTRIES. ALTHOUGH WE ARE ADMITTEDLY
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OPERATING UNDER MORE STRINGENT TIME CONSTRAINTS THIS

YEAR THAN HAS BEEN THE CASE PREVIOUSLY, THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT WAS INFORMED OF OUR PROPOSAL THROUGH CONSULTATIONS HELD IN WASHINGTON ON NOVEMBER 24. THEY HAVE THUS HAD AT LEAST 12 DAYS IN WHICH TO CONSIDER THE MATTER. OUR POSITION WAS CAREFULLY EXPLAINED AND ITS URGENCY WAS UNDERSCORED. IN THIS SITUATION WE CAN LEGITIMATELY EXPECT THAT THE GOC SHOULD TREAT THIS MATTER WITH HIGH PRIORITY.

2. ACCORDINGLY, WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR RAISING MATTER WITH

APPROPRIATE MINISTERS OR SENIOR OFFICIALS. THE FOLLOWING POINTS SHOULD BE STRESSED:

(A) THE RETURN BY THE U.S. TO A VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT REGIME IS IN THE INTERESTS OF ALL CONCERNED COUNTRIES, BUT ESPECIALLY OF CANADA IN THAT IT AVOIDS NECESSITY FOR CANADIAN IMPORT RESTRAINTS AND AVOIDS POISONING NEGOTIATING CLIMATE IN GENEVA.

(B) BECAUSE WE MUST HAVE IMPORT REGIME IN PLACE AT BEGINNING OF NEW YEAR, WE ARE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO REPORT TO PRESIDENT FORD THE OUTCOME OF THE VRA NEGOTIATIONS BY DECEMBER 15.

(C) GIVEN THE EXPERIENCE WITH UNRESTRAINED CANADIAN TRADE THIS YEAR IT WILL BE MOST DIFFICULT TO CONCLUDE VRA'S WITH OTHER COUNTRIES UNLESS IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED THAT SOME FORM OF UNDERSTANDING HAS BEEN REACHED WITH GOC.

(D) WITH REGARD TO THE FORM OF AGREEMENT, THE USG IS SENSITIVE TO CANADIAN DOMESTIC CONCERNS AND IS FLEXIBLE; WE DO NOT INSIST UPON A FORMAL VRA.

(E) FURTHER, IF SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT CAN BE CONCLUDED WE WOULD WISH IT TO REFLECT AN EXPORT LEVEL WHICH WOULD MINIMIZE NEED FOR INTERFERENCE WITH TRADE. OUR DATA INDICATES THAT 80 MILLION POUNDS WOULD BE SUCH A FIGURE.

(F) IF WE CANNOT CONCLUDE UNDERSTANDING WITH CANADA AND THEREFORE FAIL TO CONCLUDE A VOLUNTARY RESTRAINT PROGRAM LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FOR 1977, WE WILL BE FORCED TO CONTINUE WITH THE QUOTA REGIME. IN 1977 THE AGGREGATE LEVEL WOULD BE SET AT THE BASE LEVEL. IT WOULD RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED LEVEL OF ACCESS FOR CANADIAN EXPORTS OF MEAT TO THE U.S. MARKET AS COMPARED WITH THE PROPOSED 80 MILLION POUNDS IN A BILATERAL UNDERSTANDING.

(G) OWING TO THE URGENCY OF THE BILATERAL VRA NEGOTIATIONS

IN PROCESS IN WASHINGTON, WE REQUIRE CANADIAN REPLY AS
EARLY AS POSSIBLE THIS WEEK TO FOLLOWING: (1) ATTITUDE
TOWARD CONCLUDING AN UNDERSTANDING AND (2) THE ACCEPT-
ABILITY OF THE 80 MILLION POUND LEVEL. KISSINGER

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